

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GUARANTEE IN EDUCATION (SAGE)
LAW CHANGES WEBINAR
MAY 5, 2010

Questions and Answers

*This document is a compilation of the questions and answers (Q/A) discussed during the webinar hosted by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) on May 5, 2010. Note that (**) denotes additional guidance that was not available at the time of the webinar taping.*

SAGE Class Size Requirement

- Q: Can we plan on having 18:1 or 30:2 classroom ratios for next year?**
A: The Governor signed the bill into law on May 12, 2010, so LEAs should plan on the class size requirement of 18:1 or 30:2 student/licensed teacher ratio for 2010-11.
- Q: Why has SAGE law changed the class size requirement from 15:1 to 18:1 or 30:2?**
A: The bill was put forth due to current economic challenges to provide schools with more flexibility.
- Q: If a school has three sections of kindergarten at 18:1 and another student moves into the school prior to third Friday of September, does the school have to maintain the 18:1 ratios?**
A: Yes. A school must either hire a new teacher or plan for multi-aged classrooms in this case. The law does not provide for any flexibility in the 18:1 or 30:2 ratios.
- Q: Can a school be in compliance by utilizing multi-aging to meet the 18:1 or 30:2 class size requirement?**
A: Yes.
- ** Q: What subject areas should be included in the 18:1 or 30:2 class size requirement?**
A: For the purposes of the SAGE program, all courses taught by the regular licensed classroom teacher including Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science should be included in the class size requirement.
- ** Q: What if on third Friday of September a classroom has a ratio of 18:1 or 30:2 but a student moves into the district after the third Friday count raising this to 19:1 or 31:2?**
A: AB 808 requires class sizes to be to 18:1 on the third Friday in September. It is the expectation that 18:1 is maintained.
- Q: What flexibility is there to exceed the 18:1 or 30:2 class size ratios?**
A: There is NO flexibility with the 18:1 or 30:2 class size ratios. DPI may NOT grant any waivers.
- Q: Can a school meet the 30:2 class size requirement with one licensed classroom teacher and one aide?**

- A:** No. Schools must have two licensed teachers with 30 or fewer pupils to be in compliance. Aides cannot be included in student: teacher ratio counts.
- Q: Can we practice “core programming” in second and third grade?**
- A:** No. The class size requirement is 18:1 or 30:2 in all core curricular areas (reading/language arts, math, science, and social studies) in grades K-3.
- Q: If a school exceeds the 18:1 or 30:2 ratio on the third Friday of September, will they be eligible to continue with SAGE for the following school year?**
- A:** DPI will consider compliance issues on a case-by-case basis. Schools may be able to retain their SAGE contract, however, it will depend on the level of compliance issues. The DPI does have authority to terminate a contract if the terms of the contract are not being met.

SAGE Waivers

- Q: Do existing SAGE waivers continue to be in place until they expire?**
- A:** No. Current SAGE waivers expire when the school’s SAGE contract is renewed *or* when the waiver expires, whichever date is *first*.
- Q: If my school has a valid waiver for 2010-11, can I still use the 18:1 or 30:2 ratios for next year?**
- A:** Waivers are only valid for the few schools that are NOT renewing SAGE contracts for the 2010-11 school year. If a school has a valid waiver for 2010-11, but wishes to use the 18:1 or 30:2 ratios instead of the conditions supplied by its waiver, it may do so.

New SAGE Schools

- Q: When is the Governor expected to sign the bill?**
- A:** The Governor signed the bill on May 12, 2010.
- Q: How many new schools will be added to SAGE program for the 2010-2011 school year?**
- A:** The bill does not provide a limit or cap on the number of new schools to be added. However, the school must meet the eligibility requirements and complete the contract requirements.
- Q: What criteria will be used to determine whether a new school will be allowed into the SAGE program?**
- A:** The eligibility requirements are as follows:
- The district in which the school resides must have at least one school with a low-income rate of at least 50 percent.
 - The school entering into the new contract must have a low-income rate of at least 30 percent.
- Q: Will SAGE contracts for NEW SAGE schools be five year contracts?**
- A:** Yes.

Q: What is the process for adding a new school to the SAGE program?

A: Eligible districts and schools will receive a letter from DPI indicating which schools meet the eligibility requirements mentioned above. Additional information regarding how to complete the SAGE Five-Year Contract for new schools will also be provided. Contracts for new SAGE schools will be due to DPI on July 30, 2010.

Q: If a school is currently in the SAGE program, does the school need to meet the eligibility requirements for new SAGE schools?

A: No. If you are currently in the SAGE program, you do not need to meet the eligibility requirements for new SAGE schools.

SAGE Contract Renewals

Q: How can I renew my SAGE contract if it comes to my district after my last School Board meeting of the year?

A: DPI understands that timing of contract renewals is critical for schools and districts right now. We are prepared to send out information regarding contract renewals as soon as this bill is signed into law.

Q: If a school does not renew their contract, will it be able to apply for SAGE in the future if it meets the requirements?

A: At this time, new SAGE contracts are only open for the 2010-11 school year. DPI does not know if or when contracts will be open again.

Q: Are there any specific rules or regulations for charter schools?

A: No. SAGE law applies to charter and traditional schools.

2010-11 SAGE Funding, Aid

Q: What free and reduced lunch count numbers do we use to report on the PI-SAGE-ENT?

A: Use the most accurate numbers the school has available. The measure of low-income status for the pupils reported on the PI-SAGE-ENT should be in alignment with data that is reported in the Individual Student Enrollment System (ISES).

Q: Will the funding for the 2010-11 school year be the same as for the 2009-10 school year?

A: The per pupil amount remains \$2,250 for each low-income child (K-3), and DPI will be using the same process to allocate aid for 2010-11. Aid was prorated for 2009-10, and DPI may need to prorate again for the 2010-11 school year. While we do not anticipate any changes in the amount of funding available for SAGE aid, proration may take place depending on the total number of eligible students statewide.

Q: When will the per pupil funding amount for 2010-11 be known?

A: The per pupil amount remains \$2,250 for each low-income child (K-3). DPI will not know if this amount needs to be prorated and by how much until DPI receives each school's PI-SAGE-ENT low-income numbers.

Q: **Since new schools are being added to the SAGE program, will there be additional funds for SAGE?**

A: No. No additional funds have been appropriated for the SAGE program at this time.

Q: **If a school exceeds the 18:1 or 30:2 requirement on third Friday of September, will just a portion of SAGE aid be withheld, or will all SAGE aid be withheld for the entire school year?**

A: A school that is out of compliance on third Friday of September will not receive *any* SAGE aid for the entire school year.

Future Trainings, Webinars, Meetings

Q: **Will the SAGE Update meeting offered at the beginning of the school year be in person or online?**

A: The meetings will be offered in person, with the possibility of online meetings for schools that may be unable to travel for the meetings.